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PDB MEMO

DATE: 10/13/2000
SUBJECT: Possible Perpetrators of the Terrorist Attack on the USS Cole
BODY:

13 October
2000

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1. The Islamic Army of Aden (IAA) has claimed responsibility for the blast, according to press reports, [REDACTED] and other groups have the motivation and the capability to have mounted the operation. The IAA, a splinter group of the now-defunct Yemeni Islamic Jihad, in 1998 kidnapped 16 Westerners in Yemen, prompting a Yemeni security forces rescue attempt in which four tourists died.

--- Former IAA leader Abu Hasan had ties to ~~Bin Laden~~'s network and the remnants of his group would have required outside assistance to carry out this attack. Next Tuesday is the first anniversary of Abu Hasan's execution for his role in the kidnapping. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

2. The Lebanon-based Palestinian group 'Asbat al-Ansar [REDACTED] proposed a plan to ~~Bin Laden~~ and the Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ) to attack the US Sixth Fleet, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

--- The Cole is attached to the Fifth Fleet, [REDACTED] or the group may have changed the target. Asbat al-Ansar has mounted no previous attacks outside Lebanon or against a US target. [REDACTED]

3. Egyptian terrorists close to ~~Bin Laden~~ also could be responsible. [REDACTED] EIJ extremist Yusif al-Badri early this month was planning a terrorist operation against unidentified US and Jewish targets. [REDACTED]

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4. Rogue al-Gama'at al-Islamiyya leader Rifa'i Taha Musa late last month threatened publicly to hit US interests in the Middle East. He had, traveled to Yemen in mid-April to rally support for returning the Gama'at to terrorist operations, and recently appeared in a video with ~~Bin Laden~~ and former EIJ leader Ayman al-Zawahiri calling for attacks to liberate jailed Gama'at leader Shaykh Umar Abd al-Rahman.

5. Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), HAMAS, and Lebanese Hizballah have received amphibious assault training that could have prepared them for yesterday's attack.

--- Hizballah terrorist wing members discussed attacking US warships in southeast Asia using explosive-laden boats